(Amendment) Act, 1999 (46 of 1999) on the basis of recommendations made by Justice Malimath Committee, Law Commission's Reports and the report of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation (11th Lok Sabha).

None of the above amendments in the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 1999 has yet been brought into force.

Abstension of Electorates from Voting

4677. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the electorate comprising the intelligentsia abstaining from voting; and

(b) whether any survey was undertaken by any agency to find out the details of such voters; and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI) (a) and (b) The Government has no specific information on the voting behaviour of intelligentsia and is not aware of any survey conducted by any agency in this regard.

Freeze on Seats at the current level in Lok Sabha

4678. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to freeze the number of seats in the Lok Sabha at the current level of 543 till the year 2026;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, what is the plan of Government about increase of seats in the Lok Sabha in coming year?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) The Constitution 42nd Amendment Act, 1976 laid an embargo on undertaking fresh delimitation of constituencies until the figures of the first census taken after the year 2000 become available, vide proviso to article 82 and 170(3) of the Constitution. The measure was undertaken to boost family planning norms. The Government has been receiving representations to extend the embargo on the plea

that some of the States, especially the States in the South, have achieved considerable success in the area of family planning while others have quite miserably failed in their efforts in this direction; and, therefore, if a fresh delimitation is undertaken on the basis of new census figures, those States who have achieved success in family planning would be losers in respect of number of seats in the Legislatures. The Governmet has, therefore, decided to take steps to extend the current freeze on undertaking fresh delimitation till the year 2026 AD as part of its new population policy.

The Government is, however, going to have a meeting with leaders of political parties to discuss the issue as also some associated topics like delimitation of constituencies without affecting the number of seats allotted to a State so as to remove the imbalance caused due to uneven growth of population in different constituencies, rotation of reserved seats, etc. and will go by the consensus in the matter.

(c) Does not arise.

Amendment to Anti-defection Law

4679. SHRI GULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are of the view that there is a need to amend Ati-defection Law;

(b) If so, whether Government have thought of any legislation in this regard;

(c) if so, by when the legislation is likely to be introduced; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of shortcomings in the Anti-defection Law. Proposals relating to amendment to the law were accordingly included in the agenda for the meeting of political parties held on the 22nd May, 1998 but the discussion on the issue was deferred. In case, a consensus emerges amongst political parties on amendments to be made in the law, the Government would consider giving effect to such measures by introducing a suitable Bill in the matter.